PRESS RELEASE

JOHN FERNELEY COLLEGE CELEBRATES MAJOR OFSTED TURNAROUND AS ALL SIX AREAS MEET 'EXPECTED STANDARD'

Inspectors praise transformed school culture, dramatically reduced suspensions and stronger leadership following two years of sustained improvement.

John Ferneley College in Melton Mowbray is celebrating a major milestone in its transformation after a new Ofsted inspection recognised significant improvements across the school, with all six areas meeting the 'Expected Standard' and safeguarding standards also met.



The findings represent a remarkable turnaround for the Leicestershire secondary school, following two years of focused work to raise standards, rebuild confidence and create a positive learning environment for its 1,170 pupils.

In their report, following an inspection on 22 and 23 September 2026, inspectors highlighted the school's improved teaching, behaviour, attendance and leadership, describing John Ferneley College as a "welcoming, friendly and inclusive school" where pupils feel happy and safe.

Ofsted found that the school had successfully raised expectations, with suspensions falling dramatically and persistent and severe absence significantly reduced.

Inspectors also reported that lessons were purposeful and demonstrated positive relationships between pupils and staff.

Behind the improvements is a sustained programme of change led by Headteacher Terry Claridge, working alongside Mowbray Education Trust. This has included strengthening the curriculum, developing a consistent approach to teaching through the 'JFC way', improving behaviour management and investing in staff development and pupil wellbeing.

Significantly, inspectors recognised that the school's leadership had established the stability needed for lasting improvement, stating that current leaders had brought about the necessary stability in leadership, staffing and school finances to enable the school to begin to thrive.

Terry Claridge, Headteacher at John Ferneley College, said:
"The report reflects the rapid changes and improvements across all key areas that the school has made over the last two years.

I am particularly proud of the positive comments about the school's improved culture and ambition and the part our students, staff and parents are playing in continuing to drive the school forward. We continue to focus on both the academic excellence and holistic development of all our students. This report is testimony to the hard work that has been done and continues to be done."

Ofsted also recognised improvements in the school's approach to inclusion, careers education and pastoral support. Inspectors noted that pupils increasingly feel listened to, while the majority of parents and carers who shared their views welcomed the changes.

All six areas assessed under Ofsted's inspection framework, covering achievement, attendance and behaviour, curriculum and teaching, inclusion, leadership and governance, and personal development and wellbeing, were found to meet the 'Expected Standard.'

Louise Lee, Chief Executive Officer of Mowbray Education Trust, said:
"This inspection report marks a proud milestone for John Ferneley College and reflects the relentless dedication of our headteacher, leadership team, staff, and the wider trust community. Through close collaboration, we have established a clear vision for the future success of the school, bringing stability to leadership, staffing, and finances.

"It is immensely gratifying to see inspectors recognise the transformed school culture - where lessons are purposeful and calm, attendance is improving, and suspensions have fallen dramatically. We remain deeply ambitious for every student at John Ferneley College as we build on these solid foundations."

While celebrating the outcome, school leaders recognise that further work remains, particularly in raising academic achievement, ensuring teaching consistently meets individual pupils' needs and continuing to improve attendance.

However, the latest findings provide independent recognition of the progress already made and a strong foundation for the school's next chapter.

For John Ferneley College, the report represents more than a positive inspection outcome. It marks an important turning point in a continuing journey of improvement, with a renewed focus on helping every pupil achieve their fullest potential.

ENDS

For more information, interview requests please contact Kevin Urquhart at FU Media on 077137 40272 or kevin@fu-media.co.uk

High res images can be found HERE

NOTES TO EDITORS:

The full Osted report can be found via the JFC website.

John Ferneley College is an 11–16 secondary school in Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire. The school is committed to providing a supportive and ambitious educational environment in which students are encouraged to achieve academically, develop as individuals and prepare confidently for their next steps.

Mowbray Education Trust is a Leicestershire-based family of nine education settings, serving around 3,400 pupils. Its shared values are Inclusivity, Aspiration and Collaboration, underpinned by its commitment to “Children First.”

John Ferneley College can be found on Scalford Road, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire, LE13 1LH.

www.johnferneley.org